

Background Information

Veterans and Immigration Enforcement:

A [report from the Government Accountability Office](#) (GAO) released in June 2019 found that while ICE policies require it to take additional steps before removing noncitizens who serve in the U.S. military and may be eligible for citizenship, the agency does not consistently follow these policies and does not maintain complete electronic data on these veterans. The same report found that ICE does not know how many veterans have been placed in removal proceedings or removed.

GAO found that out of 250 veterans facing deportation, 92 were deported from 2013 to 2018. 85% of those deported were legal permanent residents; 30% of deported veterans had previously applied for naturalization. Had they been successful at becoming citizens, they would not have been deported.

Removal does not affect eligibility for VA benefits and services, but veterans living abroad, including deported veterans, are eligible for fewer benefits and services than those living in the United States, and most find it almost impossible to communicate with a VA office and receive the care they need.